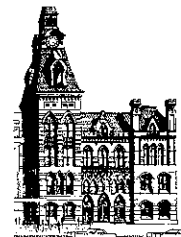




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**Testimony of the City of New Haven
Submitted to the Appropriations Committee**

In Support of

**SB 378 - AN ACT CONCERNING EXPENDITURES OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION &**

**SB 379 - AN ACT CONCERNING EXPENDITURES OF
THE JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT, THE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
AND THE PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES COMMISSION**

Senator Harp, Rep. Walker, members of the Appropriations Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 378 and SB 379. While the bills call for the review of existing programs, we respectfully request consideration of the funding for post incarceration re-entry programs designed to address the challenges faced by the communities where disproportional numbers of individuals return upon release.

Public Act 11-51 established Earned Time Credits enabling individuals who have demonstrated good behavior while incarcerated to reduce the time of their sentences. These credits have already begun to reduce the number of incarcerated individuals resulting in significant savings – but have increased the numbers of individuals returning to our communities. While recidivism rates in Connecticut have slightly declined, over half of those released from prison are rearrested within two years, and 39 percent are convicted on new charges¹. It is essential to build upon the benefits and savings achieved through Earned Time Credits to create Community Based Justice Reinvestment Programs designed to help break this cycle of recidivism and reduce the impacts to the communities to which these individuals return.

Numerous challenges await individuals returning from incarceration. Community based programs help individuals reintegrate helping to overcome some of these barriers providing counseling, job training, and support services. In New Haven, we have an active re-entry round table – a collaborative of city and state agencies, service providers, advocates, community leaders, and formerly incarcerated persons that works to help connect ex-offenders with these community based services. Community Based Justice Reinvestment Programs would build upon these collaborative efforts to identify the services most needed. In New Haven that would mean transitional employment programs as stable employment continues to be one of the most difficult barriers ex-offenders face.

Thank you for your consideration of Justice Reinvestment and programs designed to help break the cycles of recidivism.

¹ State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division, 2011 RECIDIVISM REPORT.